THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As reported by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the main reasons for low Credit Deposit Ratio in Kerala include, low credit absorption capacity weak infrastructural facilities particularly power shortage, bad roads and inadequate transport and communication facilities, absence of proper investment climate, limited area for large scale industries, labour problems, lack of professional skills and risk aversion attitude of the people.

(c) CD Ratio is monitored in the State Level Bankers Committee (SLBC) and various other fora such as District Level Review Committee (DLRC) & Block Level Bankers Committee (BLBC) and measures are identified for improving CD Ratio in the state. Various steps taken by the banks recently to increase CD Ratio include:-

(i) Doubling the flow of credit to agriculture in three years

(ii) Active lending to SSI clusters in the State

(iii) Area specific schemes catering to the needs of local communities

(iv) Active lending to SME sector

Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh

*314. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh;

(b) if so, the amount of education cess accumulated in the above Kosh in 2004-05;

(c) the amount that is going to be generated and accumulated in Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh during the current fiscal;

(d) whether his Ministry is keen that the Kosh be kept in public account which would enable it to withdraw money as and when required for various programmes; and

(e) the reasons as to why the Ministry wanted that the funds be set up on Proforma basis?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (e) It has been decided by Government to set up a non-lapsable fund for elementary education entitled 'Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh'. As per RE 2004-05, an amount of Rs. 5010 crore is estimated to have been received through 'Education Cess' in the year 2004-05. Budget 2005-06 assumes Rs. 6975 crore as receipts through 'Education Cess'. The decision to set up Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh is reflective of the intention of Government to earmark receipts from Education Cess for elementary education. The accounting of the Kosh in the public account reflects this commitment.

Emoluments to officers of public sector banks

*315. SHRI LALIT SURI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the emoluments of the officers and staff of the public sector banks have been increased with effect from 2002;

(b) if so, the exact date from which the increase has been made effective and the quantum of increase given both to officers and staff, separately;

(c) whether any increase has been allowed for the pensioners both regular and those retired under Voluntary Retirement Scheme of these banks before 2002; and

(d) if so, the extent thereof and the date from which implemented?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The increase has been made effective from 1.11.2002. As reported by the Indian Banks' Association (IBA), the average per capita gross increase per month is as follows:

Officers - Rs 3628/-

Clerks - Rs 2217/-

Sub-staff - Rs 1371/-